

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /119 W
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R 291435Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9734

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUANDA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

UNCLAS PRETORIA 1796

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, PO

SUBJECT: FURTHER REACTION IN SA TO CHANGE OF PORTUGUESE
GOVERNMENT.

REF: PRETORIA 1772 (NOTAL)

1. SOUTH AFRICAN FONMIN HILGARD MULLER ANNOUNCED APRIL 28 THAT SA HAS RECOGNIZED NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT. IN HIS POST ELECTION VICTORY SPEECH APRIL 26 PRIME MINISTER VORSTER SAID THAT CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL WOULD AFFECT SA INTIMATELY. HOWEVER, " AT THIS STAGE" HE DID NOT FORESEE THAT IT WOULD IDSTURB RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. VORSTER'S REMARKS ARE SIMILAR IN TONE TO NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS ON SUBJECT DURING PAST FEW DAYS. FIRST REACTION OF ANXIETY OVER EVENTS IN PRTUGAL HAS GIVEN WAY TO ONE THAT IMMEDIATE, CATACLYSMIC CHANGES ARE NOT IN THE OFFING, BUT THAT IN TH LONG RUN THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL IS BOUND TO ALTER EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND THAT SOUTH AFRICA MUST PREPARE HERSELF ACCORDINGLY.

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2. PRETORIA NEWS. EDITORIAL OF APRIL 26 STATED: " THE COUP IN LISBON CARRIES THE SEEDS OF PROFOUND REPERCUSSIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA. IMMEDIATE SWITCHES IN PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL POLICIES, OR HER MILITARY ONES, ARE UNLIKELY, BUT GENERAL SPINOLA'S DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE OF MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA WILL CALL FOR SOME HEAVY RETHINKING BY THE OTHER GOVERNMENTS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA."

3. DIE TRANSVALER OF APRIL 27 COMMENTED THAT SA WOULD NOT HAVE TO EXPECT " OVERLY HASTY AND DRAMATIC CHANGES IN AFRICA." SPINOLA WOULD " TREAD SOFTLY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HIS DEMOCRATIZATION PROGRAM." TRANSVALER SAID ALSO THAT " INDEPENDENCE IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE DOES NOT NECESSARILY HOLD GREAT DANGER FOR SOUTH AFRICA." THOSE TWO AREAS " COULD FIT IN NICELY WITH THE PATTERN OF INDEPENDENT BUT ECONOMICALLY INTERCONNECTED SOUTHERN AFRICAN STATES TO WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HAS REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO IN THE PAST."

4. IN APRIL 27 EDITORIAL, RAND DAILY MAIL CAUTIONED THAT SPINOLA'S PLEDGE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF PORTUGUESE AFRICA SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN " TOO MUCH AT FACE VALUE." SPINOLA A PRAGMATIST WHO MIGHT HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT CHANGE COULD BE FORCED ON HIM. TBUS, SA SHOULD BE READY FOR CHANGES WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY HAVE SERIOUS STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS.

5. THE NEXT DAY SUNDAY TIMES WARNED, " THE REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL MUST HAVE PROFOUND CONSEQUENCES FOR SOUTH AFRICA. THE CALL FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO EXERCISE VIGILANCE, AND STATESMANSHIP, IS PERHAPS GREATER THAN EVER."
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, RECOGNITION, PRESS COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PRETOR01796
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740101-0833
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974046/aaaaaerh.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PRETORIA 1772 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 SEP 2002 by BryanSD>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER REACTION IN SA TO CHANGE OF PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT.
TAGS: PFOR, SF, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005